(c) if so, the assessment of factors responsible for the hike?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) There is no variance in the assessment placed by the Cabinet Secretary in the recent meeting with the Chief Secretaries of the State Government.

(c) Does not arise.

Lapse of essential commoditites Ordinance

1438Ä SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the "Essential Commodities Act" implemented against the hoarders, black-marketeers and profit makers for the last 16 years is no more effective at present;

(b) the reasons on the basis of which the Government allowed the ordinance to this effect be lapsed in July, 1998;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the States were in favour of continuation of this law when their opinion was sought in this regard last year; and

(d) the complete details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL, SINGH VADAV): (a) and (b) The Essential Commodities Act, 1955 is in force. However, the Essential Commodities (Special Provisions) Act, 1981 which was enacted to make certain special provisions by way of amendments to the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 lapsed on 31.8.1997, After the lapse of Essential commoditites (Special Provisions) Act, 1981 on 31.8.97 two ordinances namely the Essential Commoditites (Special Provisions) Ordinace, 1997 and Essential Commodities (Special Provisions) Second Ordinance 1998 were promulgated on 3.10.97 and 2.1.98 respectively on the lines of the Act. Meanwhile, an Expert Group constituted following the directions of the Government recommended incorporation of the important features of the Essential Commodities (Special Provisions) Act, 1981 in the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. Accordingly, an ordinance, the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance, 1998 was promulgated on 25.4.1998 and also the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 1998 was moved to replace the ordiance. While the Bill was under consideration of the Parliament, the ordinance lapsed. The Bill has been referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee.

(c) and (d) Yes sir, Except Bihar, Nagaland Manipur and Sikkim and the Union Territory of Daman & Diu which did not respond on the subject, and all other State Govts. and Union Territories have expressed the view that the Essential Commodities (Special Provisions) Act, 1981 had proved to be useful and should be continued further. Some State Govts. had, however, suggested modifications to some of the provisions of the Act.

आयोडीनयुक्त नमक से बढ़ रही थायरायड की समस्या

1439. **श्री रामजीलाल:** क्या खाद्य और उपभोक्ता मामले मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान दिनांक 19 अक्तूबर, 1998 के राष्ट्रीय सहारा में "आयोडीनयुक्त नमक की बिक्री से थायराइड समस्या बढ़ी" शीर्षक से प्रकाशित समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो विशेषज्ञों की राय पर सरकार की क्या प्रतिक्रिया है; और

(ग) लोक हित में सरकार द्वारा इस संबंध में अंतिम निर्णय कब तक लिया जाएगा और इसमें विलम्ब के क्या कारण है?

खाद्य और उपभोक्ता मामलों के मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सत्यपाल सिंह यादव): (क) जी हां।

(ख) और (ग) स्वास्थ्य सेवा महानिदेशालय, राज्यों के स्वास्थ्य निदेशालयों, भारतीय चिकित्सा अनुसंधान